

Afghanistan

I. A Race of Fighters & Their Highland Home

By Sir Thomas Holdich, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E.

Author of "The Gates of India"

AFGHANISTAN, as the name implies, is the country of the Afghan. But who is the Afghan? Of all the many representatives of both European and Asiatic nationalities past and present who have adapted themselves to the infinitely varied conditions of climate and environment which are included within the borders of Afghanistan, none appear to call themselves Afghan.

The origin of the name is Persian, and the meaning of it in its archaic form is probably "highlander," or "man of the hills" (like Kohistani or Barohi), and is not significant of national origin in any way whatever. If we regard the Afghans as constituting a nation, the superficial nationality is not more of a patchwork than that of many European nations; but the separate contributions from East and West, as well as representatives of prehistoric peoples who can render no account of their coming, keep themselves distinct and apart in Afghanistan.

There is an old-world tenacity about the distinction of their genealogical claims that admits of no general fusion or amalgamation such as has created the republics of the Western world. They are a divided people, ready to recognise the necessity of submission to the "force majeure," which insists on

inter-tribal harmony, and always prepared, after much violent discussion, to combine in support of the ruling authority against a common enemy; but they are nevertheless opportunists to a man. There are certain idiosyncrasies common to them all, imported in some cases from a higher civilisation in the past, adopted in others from the sheer necessity of conforming to the demands of the faith of Islam; and there are certain customs—such, for instance, as blood feuds and reprisals—which are usually family concerns, and these will be found also more or less common to them all, but varying very greatly in intensity and determination in different tribes.

There is a rough form of chivalry inculcated by Mahomedan precept, and a great show of hospitality, which is sometimes real enough, but it is well

to know the exact limits of both. An Afghan chief will pledge himself to safeguard a stranger as far as his authority goes, and so far he is to be trusted absolutely to redeem his promise; but that will not prevent collusion with a neighbouring chief, to the detriment of the unfortunate stranger, when the limits of his authority have been overstepped.

Personally, I have never known a chief fail in his promise of protection and assistance where it



HAZARA SEPOY AND HIS SON

The Hazaras are a fine Mongolian race of the little-known northern hills of Afghanistan

Photo. V. S. Manley

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has been formally or officially given, and when he holds position and authority sufficient to guarantee its fulfilment; but he will occasionally undertake more than he can really answer for, and trust to luck to enable him to be as good as his word. Then follow such lamentable incidents as the massacre of Cavagnari and his escort.

In their political relationship with each other, when civil war arises over questions of succession or administration, the Afghan chief can be cruel and faithless, revengeful and unscrupulous, to a degree which proves him to be true to the unredeemed type of primitive savage. When all goes well

he is a courteous and dignified ruler, and, as lord of the castle and estates, quite as much concerned with the welfare of his slaves and dependents as any feudal chief of the Middle Ages.

Such, in short, are the general characteristics of a people who must always be considered as quite distinct from the inhabitants of those frontier hills which intervene between Afghanistan and India, some of whom (as the Mohmands) claim Afghan affinity, and some (as the Afridis and those pestilent tribesmen the Wazirs) are of an origin so ancient that it is difficult to trace. There is a liability to confusion in the public mind

between the Afghan and the North-West Frontier tribesman. With the latter we have nothing to do in this article on Afghanistan; but it should be remembered that these "independent" tribes have never been conquered either by the Afghan or by any of his predecessors, and that they are generally of an origin infinitely older than the modern Afghan, independence having been their inviolate birthright through all the ages.

Having dealt with the Afghan community as a whole, and pointed out a few common characteristics, it will be well to discriminate between the various races which together give the Afghans a recognised nationality, and to account for their presence in the country as far as may be without touching on their history. Here we have to face the problem of environment, which, apart from separate origin, has so shaped



CAGE OF DEATH IN A LONELY PASS

If one could peer through the bars of this cage there would be seen a little rubbish on the floor of it. That rubbish was once a man caught thieving in the Lataband Pass from Afghanistan into Bokhara. He was placed in this iron cage at the top of the pole and left to die of hunger. These man-cages are a favourite Afghan method of dealing with criminals

Photo, P. O. Crawford



AFGHAN GUARDS TAILORED BY THE OLD CLOTHES MAN

These two guardians of the Ameer's law on the Jelalabad road are clothed in the secondhand uniforms which are largely imported into Afghanistan and with which most of the army is equipped. The Ameer's authority is absolute, but his subjects are respecters of no law but force

Photo, P. O. Crawford



AN AGED PATHAN WANDERER OVER THE HILLS OF AFGHANISTAN

This old Pathan is a fine example of the Afghan type with semi-Hebraic features. In his tattered mantle and with his stout staff he wanders about the rugged passes between India and his native land picking up the meagrest living by the wayside. In India the term Pathan is applied indifferently to all the Afghans, whose proper collective name is Pushtun—i.e., "Highlanders"

Photo, Holmes & Co., Peshawar



AFRIDI WATCHER OF THE HILLS IN A LAND OF BLOOD FEUDS

The Afridis, who live in and about the great Khyber and Kohat Passes between Afghanistan and India, are a powerful and independent Pathan tribe who have been the cause of many of India's "little wars." Treacherous and ferocious, they learn from youth to distrust all men, even their nearest relations. The Afridi always has his musket ready for use in an ambush

Photo, Holmes & Co., Peshawar



THE DEFT-FINGERED CRAFTSMEN OF KANDAHAR

Before the devout Mahomedan answers the call to prayer he must observe certain ceremonial ablutions. This coppersmith of Kandahar is engaged on the manufacture of lotas, copper vessels used for this purpose, which also take the place of the household crockery of Western civilization. He has made the fine tray seen hanging on the pole

Photo, V. S. Manley

and moulded the character of these races as to render them not merely distinct and aloof from each other, but, to a certain extent, actually hostile. This, after all, is a geographical problem, and requires a consideration of the natural features of the country.

Briefly, Afghanistan extends from the Oxus and the artificial boundary connecting that river at Charjui with the Persian frontier on the north, to Baluchistan on the south, and from the Persian frontier to the hilly borderland of India which shelters the independent frontier tribes to which we have just alluded on the east. It

is a vast upland country, rising to Himalayan altitudes in the north, gradually shelving southwards towards the deserts of Baluchistan, never approaching sea-level, but always within sight of the everlasting hills. These extend in long, trailing offshoots from the great central divide of the Hindu Kush, rising sharp and aggressive in comparatively narrow ridges as they trend south-westward, but massed in mighty form and irregular structure as they buttress that divide on the north, leaving but scanty opportunity for a width of well irrigated and fertile plain between their foothills and the Oxus.



AN AFGHAN COPPERSMITH FINISHING AN ORNATE LOTA

The coppersmith is seen here completing a lota by tinning it. It is provided with a spout so that the water may be poured over the hands to meet Mahomed's prohibition against the use of still water. These Kandahar craftsmen produce fine, artistic work with the aid of only a few simple tools. The name lota is derived from the sacred lotus flower

Photo, V. S. Manley

It is difficult for the traveller in Afghanistan to realise how much of that great plateau land is mountainous and unprofitable. Quite two-thirds of its area, from the Oxus southwards, must be reckoned as mountainous; but the valleys of the main rivers are wide and spacious, and the Oxus, the Kabul, the Helmund (especially the lower reaches of that river), and the Har-i-Rud (the river of Herat), all flow through plains rich with cultivation, where irrigation is carried out with a perfection of ingenuity which says much, indeed, for the unscientific "rule of thumb" methods of Afghan engineering. Some

rivers (the Kabul and the Har-i-Rud, for instance), with many of the minor streams, are exhausted altogether in the dry season, the whole volume of the river being distributed amongst the fields. The Karez system of conducting water from the nullah beds in the foothills by underground tunnels, till it reaches the surface, is common in the south.

Northern Afghanistan appears in the spring months of the year to be a green expanse of verdure graced by an abundance of fruit blossom and streaked with byways passing along the banks of canals, the air being filled everywhere with the sweetness of the



SHOPPING PARTY OF BALUCHIS FROM THE BOLAN PASS ENGAGED IN BARGAIN-HUNTING

These Marri Baluchis are natives of the Bolan Pass and for a time caused considerable trouble to the British until they were finally subdued, after an arduous campaign. Nomads, they spend the summer months in their native hills, but with the advent of winter they penetrate to the warmer plains of India. Here they are seen purchasing in a Quetta shop secondhand uniforms and clothing such as the majority of Afghans furnish themselves with

Photo V. S. Manley



CURIOSITY IN KABUL: CROWD IN AFGHANISTAN'S CAPITAL GREATLY INTERESTED IN THE CAMERA

The clothing of the Afghans seen above is typical of the crude garments worn by the lower classes. Shabby and unkempt, the civilians offer a marked contrast to the military with their ornate though ill-fitting uniforms. The Afghan is a fine horseman, and two cavalry officers are to be seen on the right. Although not too particular as to their personal cleanliness, they lavish great care over the grooming of their horses, of which they are very proud

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scented willow. Through the soft haze of early summer the hills appear in dim outline, and the faint indication of shadow-flecked villages climbing their sides recall visions of Southern Europe.

Scenes of Enchanting Beauty

The valley of the Logar (the chief affluent of the Kabul River), the valley of Kohistan, to the north of the city, and the Chardeh plains, to the west, are all of them visions of loveliness in summer, and hardly less beautiful when sheeted with ice and snow in winter. All this northern region in Afghanistan partakes more or less of the scenic beauty which we usually associate with Kashmir. Within the folds of the Hindu Kush there are valleys of indescribable beauty, and the rough and broken plains of Kohistan, from Charikar (where the Ghorband River of the Hindu Kush breaks through the hills) to Kabul, are specially attractive, with picturesque villages half hidden in the greenery of abundant

orchards or climbing up the broken banks and cliffs that overshadow mountain streams.

The Kabul River, which, historically and geographically, is the most important river in Afghanistan, from its birthplace beyond Kabul city to the deep cliff-bound reaches of its passage into the plains of India, has a widespread basin, which includes much of the wildest mountain regions of the Indian trans-frontier. The long river affluents from the Hindu Kush, on the north (notably the Kunar or river of Chitral), and the Panjkova all traverse regions which have been unexplored by Europeans since the days when Alexander forced passages across them on his way to India by a route which has long since been superseded by the now well-known high road connecting Peshawar with Kabul.

In Unknown Kafiristan

Of the tribes of the Kabul basin, which existed three centuries B.C., but little trace remains, the most remarkable



GRAVE AND REVEREND SEIGNIORS OF KABUL

The Afghan, like other Eastern peoples, is wont to conduct the affairs of his country on lines which would not be greatly appreciated in Western circles. Such Government officials as these are not averse from making their term of office one of financial benefit to themselves



ON SECRET SERVICE: AFGHAN BEGGAR SPIES IN AN INDIAN BAZAAR

The East is overrun with plots and political double-dealing. The wandering mendicants and beggars who haunt the bazaars figure largely in the maze of intrigues. These ragged figures with their begging-bowls, which they thrust before passers-by, glean much valuable information in their wanderings, and are always prepared to sell it to the highest bidder in their native land

Photo. V. S. Manley

exception being that offered by the Kafirs of Kafiristan, who occupy a great part of this region. These strange people are found under different tribal designations on both sides the Hindu Kush, from south of Chitral to the slopes of the Badakshan spurs, reaching north of the Hindu Kush towards the Oxus. But few Europeans have met them, and the Afghans themselves are content to leave their indescribably wild and rugged mountain fortresses alone, although Kafiristan is an integral part of Afghanistan. Undoubtedly the Kafirs—at least, in the southern valleys near Chitral—are modern representatives of those

Nyseans who claimed to be compatriots of the Greeks, and who welcomed Alexander with truly Bacchic festivity. Their city Nysa they claimed to have been founded by their leader Dionysos, in prehistoric times.

The classical legend is to the effect that Dionysos, or Bacchus, sprang from the thigh (Greek, *meros*) of Jupiter, and therefore the Nyseans claimed that the mountain on the slopes of which Nysa was built was called Meros. But the full story of Pelasgic or Greek influence in Afghanistan has yet to be told.

North of Kafiristan, extending to the Oxus, lies the province of Badakshan,



SHREDS AND PATCHES MAKE PICTURESQUE AFGHANS

These sturdy young hillmen, despite their tattered clothing, are well shod and capable of covering long distances. Unlike the upper classes, who are greatly addicted to debauchery, these people are noted for their sobriety. Capable of sustaining great hardships and privations, they are for the most part treacherous, cruel, and deeply suspicious of foreigners

Photo, Holmes & Co., Peshawar



BEAUTY OF WOMANKIND IN A LAND OF BLOODSHED

The women of Afghanistan are of distinctly prepossessing appearance. Their fine features of Hebraic cast are set off by their love for bejewelled nose and finger rings, head and other ornaments. Tall and of sallow complexion, they present a striking picture, which is, however, rarely seen by "unbelievers" owing to their rigid seclusion. Nevertheless, amorous intrigue is common among them

Photo, Holmes & Co., Peshawar

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the Greek kingdom of Bactria. Beneath the foundations of its capital city (Balkh) lies the material evidence which may yet support that city in its claim to be the mother of all cities, older than Nineveh, the oldest city in the world, with historical connections with ancient Assyria and more modern Persia which would render its history one of entrancing interest and romance.

Turkish Races in Afghanistan

Beyond Kafiristan and Badakshan Afghanistan reaches out a long thin arm, called Wakkan, to embrace the Oxus sources (there are many of them), and a part of the Pamirs, ultimately touching the Chinese frontier. It is a curious extension into country occupied by Kirghiz nomads and a people of ancient Persian extraction, and its geographical weakness is only justified by political exigency. The Indian Government were the authors of it.

Next to the Kabul, the Oxus river (as much Afghan as Russian) is the most important of the waterways. After passing the Badakshan defiles it flows in a broad and almost placid stream to Charjui, from which point it ceases to define the Afghan frontier. The plains of the Oxus (to the south of the river) here include some of the most valuable and productive areas in Afghan-Turkistan, and in the regions round about Balkh and Tashkurghan are still to be found evidences of a system of irrigation rivalling that of Babylon. Here are settled the best of the Turkish races in Afghanistan, for the Turkman of the Oxus plains is as good with the spade as with the spear, and his raiding proclivities have lately been much modified by his success as an agriculturist.

Where None but the Fit Survive

Unlike the restless tribes of the Indian frontier, those of the northern Afghan frontier are content to develop their own resources in peace. They have nothing whatever in common with the races to the south of the central divide.

Other people of Turkish origin there are indeed to the south, and they are

well enough known on the Indian frontier as Ghilzai (or Khilji). These are the people who annually migrate in numbers to the plains of India, and who carry on most of the caravan traffic of Afghanistan. They are a fine fighting race, and owing to their drastic eugenic laws, which allow none but the fit to survive, are a people of most remarkably well-developed physique. The Ghilzai tribes occupy the rolling plains of Central Afghanistan from Ghazni to the British frontier.

The districts occupied by the Ghilzais are the lowlands of the plateau bordered by the highlands of the Helmund basin. These highlands are very little known. They are of great altitude and are said to be inexpressibly bleak and dreary. Such as they are, they form the home of another race of people—the Mongolian Hazaras. They are a hardy, hard-working tribal community, making excellent sappers or engineers for road-making and public works generally, being absolutely Mongolian and having nothing to do with either Turks or Tajiks.

Most Powerful Mongols of the East

The roughness of their environment has given them hard constitutions and a fine physique. They are the most powerful Mongols, physically, that are to be found in the East. Withal they are hospitable and friendly and far more to be trusted than the generality of the Afghan races. Genghiz Khan, the great Central Asian destroyer, is said to be responsible for their presence in Afghanistan, and he has certainly left the trace of the Mongol behind him even as far south as Southern Baluchistan; but the history of the Hazara is still a matter of obscurity.

Thus we find in Northern and Central Afghanistan, overlying, and in great part displacing, the original stock of ancient Khorasan, three or four quite distinct races, now amalgamated and co-ordinated under a feudal system of government (the very antithesis of Bolshevism), of which the administrative head belongs to yet another



OUT FOR A STROLL IN PICTURESQUE BUT ODORIFEROUS HERAT

This unique photograph of a narrow street in Herat was taken by Sirdar Ikbāl Ali Shah, an Afghan nobleman who holds an appointment at Edinburgh University. Rough and lacking in drainage and with tall, overshadowing, close-shuttered houses, the street is typical of an Afghanistan town. Owing to strong native prejudices such intimate photographs of Afghan life are rarely seen

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race, the most remarkable of them all. And this race is as distinctive in appearance and in character as the Turk or the Mongol.

The ruling race of Durani Afghan (divided into many clans) is, according to its own traditions, Hebraic. To look at (and to deal with) the Durani is a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a true son of Israel. Tracing his genealogy back to Kish, the father of Saul, he fiercely maintains that his progenitors were brought into Afghanistan from the far west (from Rوم), and that after long years of suppression he has at length made good. Officially he hates the Jew, as did the Israelite of old, but practically it seemed to me that the Jews were well enough treated in Afghanistan, only they were not numerous. There is much to be said for his claim, but it cannot be said here. The very name of his capital city—K a b u l—is suggestive, and in spite of his profession of faith as a strict Sunni Mahomedan, there are undoubted traces of Hebrew ritual in some of his religious observances.

We have to remember that the great highways for trade between East and West, which have been closed for five centuries by the Turkish occupation of Eastern Europe, were intermittently open for at least thirty

centuries before that obstruction to the channels of trade took place.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we should find in all parts of Afghanistan, from the Pamirs to Persia, wherever they have not been displaced by later alien immigration, relics of that ancient Aryan stock that have never been driven out of the country altogether and never destroyed, nor that an archaic form of Persian—i.e., Pushtu—should be the fundamental language of the country. The Tajiks

of the extreme north, the Kohistanis about Kabul, the innumerable tribes and clans of the southern and western plains, all seem to belong to this original Aryan race.

Herat and Kandahar, which cities with Kabul are the principal commercial centres of Afghanistan, are, in fact, very Persian in type.

There is little to be said for the beauty of South-Western Afghanistan, where the hills give place to wide sterile plains and occasional sandy desert, streaked with rugged hills. The lower reaches of the Helmund River, including the great bend northward, must at one time have been bordered with a fair width of cultivation, some of which is still maintained by irrigation. There are to be seen the stark relics of cities of the old Kaiani kingdom, so withered and wilted by the wind-driven sand waves that all



AN AFGHAN SPORT

A Sikh in the Khyber Pass with his falcon, which provides one of the few means of sport open to hill-dwellers



A BUSY STREET IN GHAZNI, ONCE THE CAPITAL OF AN EMPIRE

Another photo by Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah showing the everyday life in a main street of Ghazni, a town 7,000 feet above the sea, once the capital of a great Afghan empire. Closely-veiled women, turbaned Afghans of all ranks, horsemen and carts, mingle together in the rough and steep street leading to the bazaars where the Afghan conducts his buying and selling

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angles have been rounded off, and they stand as groups of rounded columns in the midst of the sand wilderness.

The valley of Herat itself, which has been much belauded for its wealth of cultivation and picturesque beauty, is indeed most attractive, but it is narrow and the cultivable area is much restricted. It is, however, famous for its fruit. The melons of Herat have been rightly famed ever since the first of the Turk Emperors of India (the Emperor Babar) wrote his appreciation of them in his inimitable diary.

Fruit is, perhaps, the chief of those productions of Afghanistan which make its trade with India worthy of mention. Grapes abound in the fruit-growing districts—i.e., Herat, Kandahar, Kohistan and Afghan Turkistan; but beyond the fruit there is little of indigenous manufacture or growth to make a trade. The caravans of the north, and those that pass by Kandahar to Quetta, carry the traffic of Central Asia from beyond the Oxus to the Indian markets at Quetta and Peshawar through Afghanistan. They pick up little on the way. It is curious that in such a wide extent of mountain country

there should be no mineral wealth of any significance whatever.

One cannot pass from the consideration of Afghanistan as a nationality without reference to its important political relationship with India. Afghanistan would indeed attract but little attention in England were it not that it plays a useful part in safeguarding British Indian frontiers. The long stretch of the Hindu Kush system, which is the geographical backbone of Afghanistan, may be regarded as the backbone of India's defence, for across its broad

and many folded back are the only opportunities for an advance from High Asia India-wards. Afghanistan has indeed ever been regarded as the geographical and political buffer between High Asia and India, but past history has shown us that it is a buffer with certain physically weak points in it, which have been made ample use of by countless generations of invaders. It has, therefore, always been an essential feature in the foreign policy of the Indian Government that an independent Afghanistan should be maintained as a friendly ally, and that these weak spots should be closely watched.

The routes to India which have been most utilised



MERCHANT OF KABUL

Shrewd business men, many of these traders amass large fortunes. As they claim to be of Jewish descent, their success is perhaps explained



MARKSMEN OF MERIT: AFRIDI WARRIORS IN FIGHTING KIT

Although armed with rifles of an obsolete pattern these men have repeatedly proved themselves excellent marksmen. Stationed behind crags and boulders on the hillside, their accurate shooting causes great havoc to an unprepared foe. Owing to their extensive knowledge of the mountains they excel in every type of guerrilla warfare

Photo. Burke Lahore

for purposes of invasion, or of migratory tribal irruption, are those which, passing the Hindu Kush by one or two only of its many gateways, converge in the first instance on Kabul, whence there are several more or less open ways to India, of which the best known are those of the Khyber and the Kurram, which, passing through the frontier hills, lead straight into the Indus valley.

When Ghazni was the capital city, in later times, a central route—that of the Gomul—was made free use of for intermittent raids into India, which sometimes reached far southward into the Indus valley: but the southern routes—i.e., those that passed from Herat via Kandahar, within reach of the Persian border—were never utilised until the sixteenth century, when the

great Persian robber, Nadir Shah, followed them into India.

In modern days it is these routes, skirting the eastern borders of Persia, on which military attention is chiefly fixed. The northern routes—i.e., those of the Hindu Kush—might easily be rendered impracticable by methods with which the last great war (which taught us so much about mountain defence) has made us familiar. Nor are the central routes open to any force that has not the complete command of Kandahar and Kabul.

But the southern routes, via Kandahar and Quetta, are certainly open to a comparatively *small* offensive force, acting with rapidity and vigour until called upon to knock at the gates of Quetta. It would, however, get no farther.



A GATE TO INDIA : CAVALCADE OF CAMELS TRAVERSING THE ROUGH AND WINDING ROUTE OF THE BOLAN PASS
One of the main links between Afghanistan and the outer world, the grim Bolan Pass winds its tortuous way among the most arid hills. To keep this great artery between Afghanistan and India open and safe from raiding tribesmen, Britain has devoted untold labour and many lives. More eloquent than any descriptuve pen, the camera here tells why Afghanistan's barrier of bare hills keeps it a secluded land

Photo, V. S. Manley

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II. The Story of the Gates to India

By R. W. Frazer, LL.B.

Author of "British India"

FROM the tenth century until the first half of the eighteenth century Afghanistan formed the principal highway of the Moslem invasion of India, and had no separate corporate existence. Nadir, Shah of Persia, made himself master of Herat and Kandahar in 1739, and then advancing into India hastened the fall of the Mogul Empire. On Nadir's assassination in 1747, Ahmed Khan, a chieftain of the Durani clan, gained the support of local chieftains and laid the foundations of the kingdom of Afghanistan. At his death, after a rule of twenty-six years, his sway extended from Peshawar to Herat, and from Kashmir to Sindh, practically all North-West India.

He was succeeded by his son Timur who died in 1793, leaving twenty-three sons to contend among themselves for the support of the Afghan chieftains in efforts to gain the Ameer-ship of Afghanistan and the throne of Kabul. From out of this fratricidal chaos Shah Shuja, by the aid of his minister, Fattah Khan, succeeded in assuming control of the kingdom left by his father.

Treachery and Murder

The Peace of Tilsit in 1807 between Napoleon and the Tsar Alexander aroused misgivings in England as to a French and Russian advance towards the East and an invasion of India through Persia and Afghanistan. Envoys were accordingly sent in 1809 to conclude defensive alliances with Persia at Teheran, and Afghanistan at Peshawar.

The alliance with Afghanistan collapsed in 1818, when the treacherous murder of the minister, Fattah Khan, led to the dethronement of Shah Shuja, and assumption of the Ameer-ship by Dost Mohammed, son of Fattah Khan.

Shah Shuja sought refuge at Peshawar, over which Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab, had assumed suzerainty in 1823, and had afterwards, in 1834, annexed during an effort of Shah Shuja to regain Kandahar by the aid of Sikh soldiers. The dread of Russia's approach towards India became pronounced in 1837, when Persia laid siege to Herat, a siege only raised on a threat of war. In the same year a Russian officer, Captain Viktewich, was received at Kabul by Dost Mohammed, who would have preferred to be friendly with England on the one condition of the restoration of Peshawar to Afghanistan.

In order to establish what was termed the independence and integrity of Afghanistan, it was finally decided, towards the close of 1838, by the Governor-General, Lord Auckland, that Shah Shuja should be reinstated as Ameer at Kabul, and Dost Mohammed deposed. An army of some 14,000 soldiers invaded Afghanistan, Dost Mohammed fled to Bokhara, and Shah Shuja was enthroned as an ally and friend of England, with 10,000 British troops to support him.

A Tale of Disaster

Three years later serious trouble broke out. The British Envoy-elect, Sir Alexander Burnes, was slain in November, 1841, and his successor, Sir William Macnaghten, having been murdered in December on the slopes of the Siya Sang hills, the garrison at Kabul, of over 4,000 fighting men and 12,000 camp followers, were compelled to withdraw from their cantonments.

Of all the troops who fought for their lives in their retreat through the snow-clad mountain passes, only one Englishman, Dr. Brydon, reached Jalalabad, half-way between Kabul and Peshawar, where Sir Robert Sale lay entrenched. A few sepoys and camp followers alone among the natives found their way back to India, there to spread abroad the tale of disaster that had befallen the British army amid the passes of Khurd Kabul.

It was not until October, 1842, that the British flag was again flying over the city of Kabul, an army of retribution having relieved General Sale at Jalalabad and General Nott, who had held out at Kandahar. Kabul was given over to flames, and its great bazaar destroyed.

Dost Mohammed, who had surrendered in 1840, and had remained a prisoner in India, was again led back to Afghanistan as its acknowledged ruler, Shah Shuja having in the meantime been ignominiously slain by his own people.

The future of Afghanistan was by proclamation of October, 1842, declared to rest in the hands of its own people, who were to establish their own independent government, while the Indus and rivers of the Punjab were to be the future defences of India. The border tribes of Afghanistan and mountain passes were to be "placed between the British army and an enemy approaching

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from the west, if, indeed, such an enemy there can be."

On the death of Dost Mohammed, in 1863, Afghanistan drifted into civil war and towards anarchy, the succession of his son, Shere Ali, being disputed by his brothers. It was not until 1868 that Shere Ali succeeded in establishing himself at Kabul as acknowledged ruler, and in the following year visited Lord Mayo at Ambala, in hopes of securing a treaty of alliance. Lord Mayo promised him "moral support" and assistance with money and guns, and gave him an assurance that Russia would acknowledge the Oxus as the northern boundary of Afghanistan. This assurance was confirmed in 1873, when the northern boundaries were determined, and Russia declared that Afghanistan lay outside her sphere of influence in that part of Asia

in the Residency at Kabul, and there they remained for five weeks before they met their deaths at the hands of a city rabble and the treacherous soldiers of the Ameer. The result was inevitable. Within a few weeks Sir Frederick Roberts, who had taken a force of little over 5,000 through the Kurram Pass, was in possession of Kabul, and Yakub Khan had abdicated.

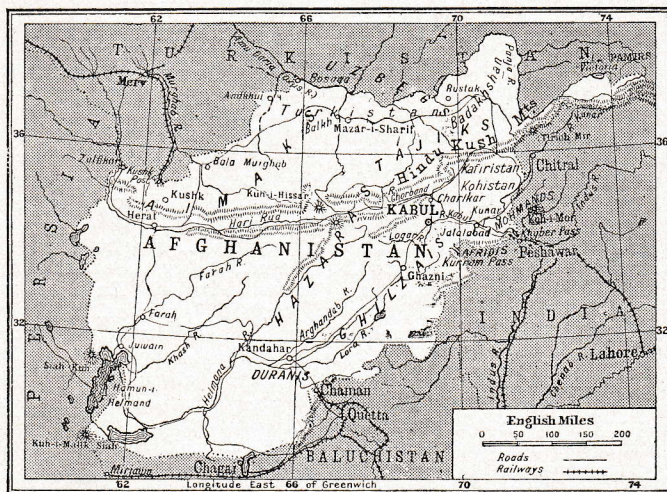
During the ensuing winter the British forces held the mud wall defences of the cantonments against the almost overwhelming forces of their swarming enemies. In July of 1880, Ab-dur-Rahman Khan, a grandson of Dost Mohammed, was proclaimed Ameer. But only a few days later a brigade, under General Burrows, was disastrously defeated at Maiwand, near Kandahar. The famous march of General Roberts, who, with a command of 10,000 troops, including fewer than 3,000 Europeans, covered 303 miles from Kabul to Kandahar in twenty days, was followed by the overthrow of the Afghan army, a victory which afterwards gained for Sir Frederick Roberts the title of Lord Roberts of Kandahar.

Efforts to define the frontier of Afghanistan towards the west were complicated by Russia, in 1885, of the outlying post of Panjdeh, and by subsequent negotiations obtaining the southern valleys towards Herat, so that she has now a railway station at Kushk, 70 miles from Herat.

In order to guard the passes which lead across the Hindu Kush to the Pamirs and Central Asia, the frontier State of Chitral was occupied by British troops, and in 1895 it was decided that a military force and a resident Political Agent should be located there.

The year 1901 was signalled by the death of the Ameer Ab-dur-Rahman Khan, the succession of his son, Habibullah Khan, and the inauguration by Lord Curzon of a new scheme for the defence of India. The Trans-Indus district, including Bannu, Peshawar, Kohat, and Dera Ismail Khan, was separated from the Punjab as a new North-West Frontier Province under the charge of an Agent to the Governor-General, and a Chief Commissioner.

The Agencies of Chitral, Dir, and Swat, and of Khyber and Kurram valley, and



AFGHANISTAN AND ITS PEOPLES

The perplexity of Shere Ali for the safety of his dominions was not lessened when, in 1876, the British advance to a permanent position at Quetta seemed to him to indicate a future advance on Kandahar and Herat. Shere Ali deemed it prudent to receive the Russian General Stolietoff at Kabul, and at the same time refused to receive a British envoy, or to allow one to enter his dominions, the result being that war against Afghanistan was declared in November, 1878.

On the approach of a British army Shere Ali abandoned Kabul, only to die the following year at Balkh. His son, Yakub Khan, was installed, and by the Treaty of Gandamak a British envoy was received at Kabul to oversee the future external policy of Afghanistan. Sir Louis Cavagnari and a doomed band of followers took up their abode

AFGHANISTAN & ITS STORY

of the tribal country including North and South Waziristan were also placed under his charge. The policy of substituting tribal levies for regular troops along the frontier advanced posts was carried into effect by placing the Samana Rifles in some of the Samana Posts, and the Kurram Rifles in the Kurram.

The experiment of imposing a blockade instead of undertaking a costly expedition was tried against the raiding Mahsud Waziris, but it was not until a series of punitive expeditions had been carried into the Mahsud country that this tribe paid the fines inflicted for raids and outrages on British territories and subjects and restored the rifles they had stolen or captured.

It was, however, found that during the Mahsud campaign the newly-formed local militia deserted, taking with them their rifles, ammunition, and the military knowledge they had gained under British officers, with the result that the Mahsuds were able to attack our hastily summoned troops under strict military discipline, armed with British rifles, and acquainted with the most advanced military tactics.

In 1920 it was therefore found necessary to occupy the Mahsud country and surround it by a quadrilateral road suited for the movement of regular troops.

Any such enclosure of the entire frontier tribal country would be impossible. Aid must be sought in future from an extended use of aeroplanes and airships, armoured-cars suited for mountainous tracks, and improved communications along the frontier.

The insecurity of the ruler of Afghanistan may be judged from the fact that the Ameer Habibullah Khan was assassinated in February, 1919, whereon his brother, Nasrullah, seized the throne, only to be ousted on March 4th by Amanullah Khan, the third son of Habibullah Khan.

His accession was followed, in May, by the crossing of the Indian frontier by Afghan troops and opening of hostilities, which continued until June, when the Ameer asked for an honourable peace, which was signed in August.

Conversations took place at Kabul during 1921 between a British Mission and the Ameer, with a view to forming ties of friendship. Though Turkish and Bolshevik influences caused the conversations to be prolonged, a treaty of friendship was signed at Kabul on November 22. It agreed that Russian consulates should not be allowed in certain areas, reaffirmed Afghanistan's complete independence, and restored the privilege of importing munitions through India.

AFGHANISTAN: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

The Independent State of Afghanistan is an Asiatic country lying between India, Persia, and Turkistan, consisting of eight provinces, or districts, of Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Afghan Turkistan, with Badakshan, Kafiristan, Kohistan, and Wakkan.

Area about 245,000 miles. Population about 6,380,500, of whom about 2,200,000 are the ruling Duranis and the Ghilzais. Other races are Hazaras, Aimaks, Uzbeks, and Tajiks.

Government

Practically an absolute monarchy under an hereditary Ameer. Provinces are under governors (hakim), each possessing his own army. Three grades of nobles or chiefs: sirdars (hereditary), khans, and mullahs (Mahomedan priests or teachers). Justice is in the hands of subordinate officials in criminal cases, and judges (kazim) in civil cases, the Koran being the legal code. Bribery, spoliation, and embezzlement occur frequently.

Army

Regular forces of the Ameer are said to be about 98,000 men (including about 20,000 mounted men and 400 guns), supplemented by levies in the provinces. Afghanistan's military strength lies principally in the rugged formation of the country, its easily controlled mountain passes, and the unlimited aptitude of the natives for every form of guerilla warfare. They are well supplied with rifles and ammunition imported through Persia and now through India.

Commerce and Industries

In spite of the mountainous and arid state of much of the country, there are many fertile plains

and valleys, producing two harvests a year in most parts. Wheat, barley, peas, rice, millet, and maize are most important crops; the many fruits grown are in great abundance and are an important item of food both fresh and dried. Dried fruits are largely exported.

An unusual variety of fat-tailed sheep, the tails being of enormous weight and size, occurs in Afghanistan. It forms the principal native meat food, and its tail provides a substitute for butter, while the wool affords the largest export item. Silks, felts, carpets, camel and goat hair articles, and sheep-skin coats are principal industries.

Trade statistics 1919-1920: Exports to India, £1,975,000; imports from India, £1,607,000. Exports and imports, Bokhara, said to be about 4,000,000 roubles.

Communications

No railways, and only roads over Khyber and Bolan Passes to Kabul and Kandahar, respectively. are fit for light wheeled traffic. All merchandise is carried by camels or ponies on ancient trade routes. No navigable rivers.

Chief Towns

Kabul, the capital (about 150,000), Kandahar (31,500), Herat (20,000), Ghazni (10,000), Jalalabad (5,000).

Money

The Kabul rupee, worth about 8d. at normal exchange rate, is standard currency; taxes and other payments are frequently made in kind. Rupees, three other silver coins, and two copper coins are minted at Kabul. Since 1920 local currency notes, face value from 1 to 100 rupees, have also been in use.



GIRLS OF THE EASTERN BORDER OF ALBANIA DANCING IN THE GORGEOUS DRESSES OF THEIR CLAN

These girls do most of the work in the fields, while men pursue or evade vendettas. To them fall, like a holiday task, shepherding and cattle-tending, when they embroider their festive attire of white on black, lacework coils, and stiff heraldic overdress, while their small savings go in silver-work with which to adorn further their already gorgeous costumes. The piper with trews and jacket is a northern highlander, or Gheg